

National Take Back Initiative
Saturday, April 28, 2018
10:00am – 2:00pm Local Time

Introduction

On **April 28, 2018** from 10am – 2pm local time, DEA will coordinate a collaborative effort with state and local law enforcement agencies focused on removing potentially dangerous controlled substances from our nation's medicine cabinets. This national take-back day will provide a unified opportunity for the public to surrender expired, unwanted, or unused pharmaceutical controlled substances and other medications to law enforcement officers for destruction and will bring national focus to the issue of pharmaceutical drug abuse. The program provides an opportunity for law enforcement, prevention, treatment and business communities to collaborate and establish a safe collection site for all Americans, regardless of where they reside.

Registration for the Event

- Registration is online only. Instructions for accessing the website and registering to participate will be sent via email.

Collection Day Protocols

- State and local law enforcement agencies will host one or more collection sites at locations of their choosing. Locations should be selected that provide easy access and available parking. DEA will be assigning personnel to as many of these locations as we can once we determine the exact number and location of these events within our division.
- Controlled, non-controlled, and over the counter substances may be collected. The general public is often unaware of the distinction in medication status.
- This event is for patients and their families to dispose of unwanted medications. Pharmacies, hospitals and physicians may **NOT** drop off their excess medications for disposal. You may accept meds from nursing homes since those meds belong to the patients and not the facility.
- Any solid dosage form pharmaceutical products (tablets, capsules, etc.) in consumer containers may be accepted. Small (pint size) bottles of cough syrups may be accepted if they are sealed in their original container. The depositor should ensure that the cap is tightly sealed to prevent leakage.
- Illicit substances such as marijuana or heroin are not a part of this initiative and should not be accepted. If an individual attempts to surrender an illicit controlled substance, law enforcement personnel should handle such material in accordance with department policy.
- **No needles may be accepted.** Intra-venous (IV) solutions, injectable, and syringes should **NOT** be accepted due to potential hazard posed by blood-borne pathogens.
- Inhalers and other compressed air cylinders may **NOT** be accepted.
- Collection efforts may be combined with community drug awareness activities and involve the distribution of brochures and other information.

- This program is anonymous and all efforts should be made to protect the anonymity of individuals disposing of medications. No questions or requests for identification should be made.
- The public should dispose of medication in its original container (Rx vial) or by removing the medication from its container and disposing of it directly into the disposal box. You are **NOT** required to remove the Rx labels from the bottles by any federal law or regulation. Since the public is turning it in to you, there are **NO** patient privacy rules being violated. All material collected (including the Rx vials) will be incinerated.
- No effort should be made by law enforcement personnel to count, inventory, or log medications.
- The public should retain possession of their own medication during the surrender process. Law enforcement personnel should not handle the medications at any time.
- A law enforcement officer must remain with the drug disposal box at all times. Collected pharmaceutical products should be handled as drug evidence with law enforcement custody to safe-guard the surrendered material.
- DEA will provide cardboard containers with plastic liners. If you need additional collection boxes, you are authorized to use a cardboard container approved by your department as part of its standard operating procedures. A heavy duty plastic trash bag works as well.
- At the conclusion of the event, a law enforcement officer should seal the containers in accordance with your agency's policy and procedure. Please seal each box with packing tape.
- The drug collection boxes should then be returned to your police department and stored per your department's standard operating procedures for safe keeping and temporary storage until they are turned over to DEA. We intend to begin collecting the containers after 2pm on **April 28**. It may take us a day or two to get to you, but we will coordinate with you regarding the pick-up.
- If you have a scale available to you at your office, we would appreciate it if you could weigh the box and simply mark the weight, to the nearest pound, on the box.
- DEA will bear the cost of destruction of these materials. If you currently have a disposal arrangement that you wish to utilize in lieu of DEA picking up these containers, you are free to do so. We want this to be as simple as possible for you.
- Media Awareness – DEA will be buying ads in newspapers nationally, though I can not guarantee print ads in every community, and we will also be communicating to radio and TV broadcasters with press releases in the days leading up to the event. We encourage you to engage your local media directly. Your departments are playing a major role in this event. We are simply attempting to coordinate these activities on a single day to raise awareness and help you provide this service to your communities.
- Common Questions
 - **Q: May we accept the containers that the drugs come in as well as the drugs?** Yes, you may. No need to separate the drugs from the vials. Plastic and glass are acceptable; **however, NO NEEDLES.**

- **Q: May we accept pre-loaded syringes?** Yes, as long as the needle has been removed by the patient. You may accept Epi Pens since the needles are sheathed.
- **Q: What advice should we give those who bring syringes with needles that we cannot accept?** Refer the public to the FDA website:

<http://www.fda.gov/medicaldevices/productsandmedicalprocedures/homehealthandconsumer/consumerproducts/sharps/default.htm>
- **Q: May we accept inhalers?** No. We can't accept inhalers or any aerosol medications because they "pop" or explode at the incineration facility.
- **Q: May we accept veterinary drugs?** Yes. Veterinary drugs are available by Rx and over-the-counter (OTC). ALL Rx and OTC drugs are acceptable. The species of the "consumer" does not matter.
- **Q: My local pharmacist says we have to remove the Rx label from the vials before we can accept them per HIPPA privacy rules?** No. HIPPA does not apply to you or this situation. This is a voluntary project that is consumer driven. You are under no obligation to remove anything from any label. The consumer should remove or deface the label if they are concerned before placing the vial in the box. All material in these containers will be incinerated. You may reassure the public that their privacy is being protected.
- **Q: May we accept medications from a nursing home?** Yes. Medications dispensed to clients in a nursing home are prescribed to the patient and are not the property of the nursing home, so they may be accepted.
- **Q. A local doctor/veterinarian/pharmacy or hospital has outdated drugs they want to drop off. May we accept those as well?** No. Doctors, pharmacies and hospitals purchase drugs direct from wholesalers and MUST keep records of all drugs they receive and dispense or administer. These entities have a system available to them that allows them to return drugs to the supplier or dispose of them by using a DEA registered company to do that for them. If they have any questions, tell them to contact their local DEA office for clarification.
- **Q: Should we count the drugs or keep a log?** No. These drop-offs are intended to be anonymous. Do **NOT** count or inventory the drugs. In fact, we advise you not to touch them at all. Have the consumer toss the container into the box and they walk away. It is that simple. We are not opening the boxes at all. We don't want to risk an accidental needle stick or expose ourselves to whatever contagions may be present and neither should you.
- Questions or concerns may be addressed to Ida Chester at (314) 538-4861 or by email to DEA-StL-NTBI@usdoj.gov